

RE Today: socially distanced learning in groups for 5-14s

E. The Golden Rule: found in many faiths and beliefs

These flexible suggestions for teachers provide outdoor or socially distanced learning ideas for groups of pupils in the 5-14 age range. As schools follow demanding guidance about distancing, these ideas can be used creatively with your pupils to provide good RE out of doors or in larger indoor spaces, making a varied learning diet possible. The activities can lead on to individual work at desks, but bring some energy, movement and interaction from RE to the class. Flexible ideas - you can tailor these easily to your needs.

This is one of a series of separate session ideas which we are making available in this learning pack, via the NATRE website.

Each one involves some engaging learning out of doors, or in larger indoor spaces, some thinking all together and some opportunities to take the learning and record thoughts and ideas individually afterwards through good RE writing activities. We hope these ideas will flex across the 7-14 age range.

- A. **The Great Chalk Circle of Enquiry** (you can use masking tape on an indoor floor or chalk on a playground)
- B. **101 words, 30 leaves, 30 pieces of RE knowledge** – a religious knowledge memory test. In which a 30 piece factual account of three religions is tested and pupils count their scores with leaves or stones, then retest to improve.
- C. **The walk of faith-exploration in 12 steps.** In which a faith community's practice is understood at increasing depth, example from Islam
- D. **The Shouted Story.** In which a faith story in 40 pieces is related by pupils in groups of 10-30 in size
- E. **The Golden Rule** explored through standing up, art and decision making.
- F. **Feeling sad? Feeling happy? Feeling brave? Feeling miserable?** Four squares on the floor to identify your responses, linked to some sacred texts.
- G. **Bring It All To Me** – a musical lesson derived from the Psalms, holy text for Jewish, Christian and Muslim people.

The Golden Rule – this could all be done outside, or in a socially distanced classroom

Different religions and beliefs teach slightly different versions of the Golden Rule. This lesson encourages pupils to learn different versions of the Rule, to think for themselves about what it means in practice and to discuss and write about the ways in which the Golden Rule could change our world or your school.

Use the Golden Rule versions from the page below – maybe enlarge them. Give each pupil one version on a card. They can talk to the person next to them about the similarities and differences between the two versions they have got. Ask the pairs to suggest one thing that would change if this version of the ‘Golden Rule’ was followed in your class, school, neighbourhood or town. After a few minutes of this discussion gather ideas from the whole class about how the Golden Rule could change our world. List these on the whiteboard. Which would be the greatest impacts?

Do you have class rules or school rules? If they were replaced by the Golden Rule, what would change? Would things get better or worse?

Tell the pupils that Saint Augustine (famous Christian from 16 centuries ago) said ‘Love God, and do as you like.’ Did he mean that if a person really loves God then they will try to love everyone else – not just themselves – too? Is this another version of the Golden Rule?

Ask pupils to do the activity ‘Stay Standing If...’ from the page below.

Ask pupils why they think all the different religions have a version of the golden Rule – is it because one true God told them all the same thing? Is it because the Golden Rule is obvious if you think about it? Or is it because we all have a voice of conscience in our hearts and minds that tells us this?

Set the pupils the art task of drawing a cartoon that illustrates the opposite of the Golden Rule – if people are only ever selfish, then what happens?

Variation: To simplify the activity, use just the easiest 6 versions of the Golden Rule from the page below .

Stay Standing If... Opening up ideas about the Golden Rule

This fun strategy works well in a classroom where pupils have seats with social distance between them or are sitting in rows. These examples open up areas of thinking about what is kind and good, unkind and bad. Ask them all to stand: ‘Everybody Up!’ Then use these prompts, and invite pupils to say something about why they stayed standing after each prompt. Stay standing if...

- A. You ever hurt or killed an animal and regretted it.**
- B. Your siblings have annoyed you this week.**
- C. You can think of someone who says ‘How would you like it if they did that to you?’**
- D. You saw someone (toddler? Driver?) ‘lose it’ and get really angry in public.**
- E. You can think of a time when you saw real generosity in action**
- F. You have a reason why it is hard not to tell lies**
- G. You can think of a clip in a movie where someone is brave.**
- H. You can name a grown up who cares a lot about children**
- I. You ever saw someone stand up to bullying**

(Add more prompts if you wish – and expect revelations from the class – this strategy is surprisingly good at encouraging candour and disclosure, so be prepared. It can be great fun.)



Rachel, 12, made this work. She uses her careful drawings of religious practice from 4 different faiths and her summaries of ethical ideas from the faiths to show that different religions share some teaching about how to live together in human and humane ways. You could share this with your pupils.

A final task from this lesson might be to illustrate different versions of the Golden Rule using Rachel's way of doing this as a model.

Enter Art in Heaven with your pupils

NATRE's annual Art in Heaven competition attracts brilliant entries from pupils all over the UK. Your pupils can enter. All the details are on the website, and this link shows off winners and commended entries on the theme of the Golden Rule:

<https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/spirited-arts-gallery/archive/2014/?ThemeID=60>

Expressions of the Golden Rule and related ideas from different religions and beliefs

<p>“Do to all people as you would wish to have done to you; and reject for others what you would reject for yourself.” Muslim, Hadith of Abu Dawud</p>	<p>The Greatest Commandment: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your strength and with all your mind. And, ‘Love your neighbour as you love yourself.’ Christian, Luke 10:28</p>	<p>“I am a stranger to no one, and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.” Sikh, Guru Granth Sahib 1299</p>
<p>“What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow human” Jewish, Talmud: Shabbat 31a</p>	<p>“No one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” Muslim, Forty Hadith of an-Nawawi,13</p>	<p>“This is the sum of duty; do naught unto others what you would not have them do unto you.” Hindu, Mahabharata 5,1517</p>
<p>“A person should treat all creatures as he himself would be treated.” Jain religion, Sutrakritanga1.11.33</p>	<p>“Strong one, make me strong May all beings look on me with the eye of a friend May I look on all beings with the eye of a friend May we look on one another with the eye of a friend” Hindu. Yajur Veda 36.18</p>	<p>“Grant that we may not so much seek To be consoled as to console To be understood as to understand To be loved as to love.” Christian, St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)</p>
<p>“Blessed is he who prefers his brother before himself.” The Baha’i faith, Tablets of Bah’ a’ ullah, 71</p>	<p>“That nature only is good when it shall not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self.” Zoroastrian, Dadistan-i-Dinik, 94,5</p>	<p>“Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.” Buddhist, Udana-Varga 5,1</p>

Use this version with older pupils for their work in class.